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Peace education as an educational reform originally responded to international threats of violence and wars. Since the end of the Cold War, peace education has directed its efforts to many different aspects of violence that plague both teachers and students. This paper reports on the efforts of one school district in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to respond to escalating violence in students' lives by teaching peace education. Peer mediation, courses on nonviolence, environmental awareness, curricula based on teaching respect, anger management, and violence prevention have been initiated to help students deal with the problems of violence in their lives. Two endnotes are included and 39 references are attached. (Author)

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PEACE EDUCATION: A MODERN EDUCATIONAL REFORM

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ABSTRACT

PEACE EDUCATION: A MODERN EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Peace education, as an educational reform, originally responded to international threats of violence and wars. Since the end of the cold war, peace education has directed its efforts to many different aspects of violence that plague both teachers and students. This paper reports on the efforts of one school district in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to respond to escalating violence in students lives by teaching peace education. Peer mediation, courses on nonviolence, environmental awareness, curricula based on teaching respect, anger management, and violence prevention have been initiated to help students deal with the problems of violence in their lives.

PEACE EDUCATION: A MODERN EDUCATIONAL REFORM

At the school where I teach it is not unusual for children to endure criminal acts and acts of violence in their neighborhoods. During the Gulf War, for example, a girl who was in my class said, "Did you see the shooting last night? My mamma made us all lie on the floor. Was that the war?" Another student asked if he could use the computer to write a letter to his mother's judge asking that she be let out of jail where she was serving a sentence for murder.

One of the girls in my class experienced the murder of her uncle and pistol whipping of her father which necessitated surgery on his jaw. One of the boys in this year's class has been dealing with the intense fear and agony brought about by his mother being shot in the throat during the first week of the school year. He is able to cope with his anger and apprehension by frequently discussing his feelings with the school psychologist, the guidance counselor, or me, and by writing about his mother in his journal. He often writes about being angry; but he also writes about people being able to love one another, even their enemies.

Elementary teacher in A Milwaukee Public School

During the 1980s critics of education in the United States advanced many reform proposals to address the failure of public education (Carnegie, 1986; Sizer,

1984). Most of these proposals were based upon an economic argument that the United States was losing its competitive edge because of a poorly trained work force (Shea, 1989). Conservative critics argued that the way to improve schools, and subsequently the economic vitality of this nation, was to teach basic skills and impose nationalized standards upon elementary and secondary schools. These reform efforts harkened back to traditional notions of schools as academic institutions, urging teachers to try harder to teach the core curriculum.

At this same time in many other countries of the world educators were arguing for a new approach to education reform (Bjerstedt, 1992), peace education, which addresses problems of violence like those faced by the children mentioned in the opening quote of this paper. Peace education has been a concern of some educational reformers since the nineteenth century (Fink, 1980) when it was heralded as a way to avoid the scourge of modern warfare. One of its champions, Maria Montessori, argued that peace education was the best way to counteract the hatred of fascism (1949). The initial attempts to teach about peace in American schools focused on war and international threats. This global emphasis was refined during the 1980s when teachers started to address the threat of a nuclear holocaust. Stimulated by fear of the destructive power of atomic weapons, modern peace education reformers assumed that children failed in schools because of high levels of violence, which frighten young people, creating a sense of despair about the future. In a postmodern world supporters of this grass roots educational reform understand that

children will not successfully complete their academic assignments until their security needs are met.

School reformers who ignore the role of violence in their pupils' lives are constructing utopian curricula while ignoring the conflagration that is destroying the hopes, determination, and self confidence of young people. In spite of the many studies that show that children are being exposed to more violence than ever before (Children's Defense Fund, 1991), educational leaders seem indifferent to the promise of peace education to improve schooling. Most professional journals and the national media have ignored peace educational reforms.[1]

Children learn from the broader culture that violence is an exciting way to resolve differences among people.

> Add to this the violence that virtually all American Children are exposed to through the media and toys and the popular youth culture. This second hand violence increased dramatically as a result of the deregulation of children's television during the Reagan years. (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1992, p. 4)

Violence, both structural and physical, makes adulthood seem like an absurd fate. Peace educators teach students how nonviolence can create peace in a world where violent images so heavily dominate both the conscious and subconscious minds of young people.

Supporters of peace education who argue that failure in schools comes from the problematic nature of modern societies so deeply steeped in violence, address the

chaotic, frightening aspects of this world by helping young people understand the nature of violence, and stress the potential of nonviolence to solve the problems caused by violence (Lawson, 1984). Peace educators realize that at risk students don't fail in schools because they are stupid, but rather that the problems of violence seem so overwhelming to youth that they can't focus on school assignments that ignore their deep seated fears and concerns. Schools will not improve their academic standards as long as pupils are distracted by violence. Children won't improve their learning of cognitive material until adults address directly the many affective concerns young people have in this violent world.

PEACE EDUCATION AROUND THE WORLD

In a postmodern world no longer divided along superpower axes, peace educators address many different concerns in unique cultural circumstances--disarmament, human rights, domestic violence, problems of underdevelopment, ecology, and nuclear issues. Peace education has gained its greatest following in Scandinavian countries (where it is often referred to as education for global survival), the Netherlands and Australia (Thelin, 1992). One form of peace education based upon the work of the Brazilian educator, Paulo Friere (1970), helps adults name forms of violence in their lives and identify ways to respond to the problems of structural violence, where people have no human rights, live in violent neighborhoods, and lack such basic essentials as health care, housing, food, or shelter (Galtung, 1975). With this understanding of structural violence, the situation in the inner cities in the United States is fast becoming of concern to peace educators (Prothrow-Stith, 1992).

At this time there exist many different names for the various forms of peace education. In Japan it is called A-bomb education, where the emphasis is upon understanding why atomic bombs were dropped upon that country and preventing their further use (Fujita and Ito, 1992; Murakami,1992). In countries of the south development education provides alternatives to colonial models of development. In Scandinavian countries peace education is often concerned with disarmament and problems of structural violence in the so-called "third world." In the United States the organization Educators for Social Responsibility at first promoted peace education under the rubric nuclear education and is currently promoting conflict resolution (Kreidler, 1990). Teachers throughout the United States are using the insights of peace education under the following headings--school based conflict management, environmental education, global studies, multicultural awareness, peer mediation, and violence prevention (Deutsch, 1991).

Peace education has important insights to offer at all different levels of schooling enterprises. At the macro level administrators use peace education to create a cooperative school climate (Krishnamurti, 1952). The goal is to create a beloved community:

> Community is a call for students and teachers to participate in school in a caring way such that the rules and concerns of the program become personally felt and community-shared responsibilities of and to all members. (Higgins, 1989, p. 205)

Thus, at a peaceful school teachers would have a high level of trust with each other, meeting on a regular basis to discuss school problems. The administrative style would be inclusive, supportive of a democratic community in which the contributions of all members are valued. Such a school would be a sanctuary for children who need a safe place to retreat from violence in their lives (Morrow, 1987).

At the micro level peace education sets guidelines for a teacher-student relationship based upon the principles of love and caring (Martin, 1992; Noddings, 1986). Peace educators use cooperative learning methodologies to de-emphasize competition and to develop a peaceful pedagogy (Harris, 1990a). A peace education approach in any discipline involves discovery learning and critical thinking methodologies (Reardon, 1989). Peace education also has a curricular component that provides important knowledge about the ways to achieve peace (Reardon, 1988). Core Concepts for peace education classes include conflict, peace, war, nuclear issues, justice, development, power, gender, race, environment, and futures (Hicks, 1988). Most recently, contemporary schools are rushing to adopt one aspect of this curricular reform, peer mediation, which is teaching youth the skills of conflict resolution (Levy, 1989).

DEFINITIONS

All these different forms of peace education have at their core teaching nonviolent alternatives. Traditionally, peace educators have been concerned with international issues--wars between nations, refugees, treaties, the United Nations, and security arrangements. In a postmodern world educational reformers adopting the

goals of peace education study all different forms of violence, both international and domestic. Violence here is used in its broadest sense, including physical, psychological, and structural violence. Violence occurs from thoughts, words, and deeds--any dehumanizing behavior that intentionally harms another. Physical violence includes direct harm to others--street crime, gang attacks, sexual assault, random killings, and physical forms of punishment. Psychological forms of violence occur often in schools and homes, diminishing a child's sense of worth. Structural violence comes from the structure of a society whose institutions deny certain basic rights and freedoms. A society is considered structurally violent when its citizens can't get work, health care, social security, safe housing, or civil rights. Many of the problems of violence in the modern world come from a commitment to militarism to solve problems. A violated and polluted environment threatens people's security and creates fear about the future. Violence at home, in the form of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and child neglect, causes students to have low self esteem and to distrust adults.

Peace educators attempt to address many different aspects of the complex nature of violence in the modern world. At the international level, they provide insights about why countries go to war and how nations can resolve disputes without using force. At the national level, they teach about defense and the effects of militarism. How do countries provide for the security of their citizens? What military arrangements contribute to peace and security? At the cultural level, peace educators teach about social norms, like sexism and racism that promote violence. At an

interpersonal level, they teach nonviolent skills to help students handle conflict in their daily lives. At the psychic level, they help students understand what patterns exist in their own minds that contribute to violence. How can they dismantle those violent ways of thinking and reacting and replace them with nonviolent ways of dealing with conflict? Peace educators go right to the core of a person's values (Peace, 1992)--teaching respect for others, open mindedness, empathy, concern for justice, willingness to become involved, commitment to human rights, and environmental sensitivity. A student in a peace education course should acquire both theoretical concepts about the dangers of violence and the possibilities for peace, as well as practical skills about how to live nonviolently. Peace education draws out of students their desires to live in peace and teaches a reverence for life (Harris, 1988).

Peace education in the United States has grown considerably in the 1980s. At the beginning of the decade few colleges and universities had peace studies programs. By the end of the decade, largely due to concerns about a nuclear holocaust, over 200 colleges and universities have some kind of peace studies program, which varies from a peace studies certificate, to an undergraduate major (at Kent State), to graduate studies (at Hawaii), and even a Ph.D. (at Syracuse) (Stevenson, 1989). At the elementary and secondary level teachers are using peace education to address problems of violence plaguing schools. The state of Oregon in 1988 passed a mandate requiring all schools to teach about peace, and school districts in many large cities (Berkeley, Hartford, and Milwaukee) have passed resolutions mandating peace studies.

A CASE HISTORY

In 1985 the school district in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (MPS) adopted a resolution endorsing peace studies at all levels and developed a peace studies curriculum (Haessley, 1991). Seven years later one quarter of the schools in Milwaukee indicate that over half their staff is teaching this curriculum. At 9% of the 160 schools in Milwaukee the entire staff is involved in efforts to teach about peace and nonviolence. In 1991 the whole school system adopted a set of goals which include the following: students will demonstrate positive attitudes towards life, living, and learning through an understanding and respect of self and others; students will make responsible decisions, solve problems, and think critically; students will demonstrate responsible citizenship and an understanding of global interdependence; and students will learn strategies to cope with the challenges of daily living and will establish practices which promote health, fitness, and safety. These goals support peace education efforts by staff at the Milwaukee public school system, an urban district located in the 18th largest metropolitan area in the United States.

As a commitment to these goals, teachers in Milwaukee have adopted a broad variety of peace education strategies to deal with increasing levels of violence in schools. These curricular revisions have taken place at all levels of the district from high school to kindergarten. The central office at MPS provides considerable support in the area of violence prevention and peer mediation.

High School Responses

Teenagers in urban school districts experience extreme levels of violence. At one high school in Milwaukee half the students indicated that they knew someone who had been murdered violently. Even for those students who do not personally experience violence, news reports are full of violent stories about young people being killed or wounded, some in deliberate gang related deaths, but also in random acts of violence. Adolescents in urban areas, often without the guidance of adults, have to help their friends grieve tragic losses from violence, as well as figure out how to achieve safety in communities where terrifying levels of violence pose a constant threat to their lives. Many of these children are suffering from post traumatic stress from living in areas similar to war zones.

All teenagers are faced with enormous challenges, difficult decisions, and tempting choices. In order to gain approval from their peers, they have to be tough and often commit violent acts. They confront sex, pregnancy, alcohol, drugs, depression, and suicide. Peace educators attempt to help teens address these challenges by empowering them to problem solve, negotiate, express their feelings in healthy ways, and communicate effectively with parents, siblings, and peers.

Riverside University High School, a large urban high school with a multicultural staff and student body, has a student group STOP THE VIOLENCE that performs skits that involve young people in role plays where they can learn nonviolent ways to respond to violent incidents that confront them in the streets, where young people are being assaulted and killed for clothing. Three other high schools in Milwaukee have

similar clubs, whose purposes are manifold: They help youth articulate their concerns about high levels of violence in their neighborhoods; they encourage young people to seek solutions; and they educate teenagers about nonviolent ways to respond to conflict.

At Riverside the open education program had a curricular theme last year on peace and nonviolence. As part of this theme 300 students spent a day at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where they heard a keynote speech on the power of love in the modern world and attended 11 different workshops on different aspects of peace and nonviolence. They created a haunted Hunger House and donated proceedings to the hunger task force. They also established a living museum honoring their African-American heritage. During the spring they built a giant wall of peace where each student added a brick that had his or her wishes for peace. Students divided themselves into mock neighborhood councils to suggest solutions for violence in their communities and held a peace olympics.

Several high schools have held classes specifically geared towards helping adolescents understand the causes of violence in their lives. At Pulaski High School a history teacher offered a one semester course, "Alternatives to Violence," in which he encouraged seniors and juniors to discuss problems of violence in their lives, inspired them to seek solutions, and let them ventilate some of their fears. Currently, at Washington High School a social worker from the Walkers Point Youth and Family Center is co-teaching a home economics class on nurturing. This class comes as a response from lobbying efforts by community clinics in Milwaukee that have adopted

for teenage parents a nurturing model that includes a three part school curriculum that, at tenth grade, teaches nurturing the self, in eleventh grade, nurturing family and community; and in twelfth grade, nurturing children (Bavolek, Dravage, & Elliot, 1992). These programs are offered on a counseling, as opposed to a didactic, format. Students meet in small groups and discuss stresses in their environment. They receive support from their peers, which helps heal some of the wounds that can lead to hatred, frustration, depression, rage, and further violence. Nurturing programs also teach assertive skills, self-respect, respect for others, care-taking, empathy, appropriate roles, and nonviolent, nonpunitive ways of managing behavior.

Two half year classes at two of twelve high schools in Milwaukee do not represent a high proportion of teachers adopting peace education reforms. However, they are just a tip of the iceberg. The student STOP THE VIOLENCE groups are strong expressions of students crying out for adults to pay attention to violence in their lives. Other high school teachers are infusing peace education concepts into their existing classes--teaching the history of Vietnam and peace movements, choosing literature that speaks to the problems of urban violence in English, or teaching about ecological security in biology. Other teachers are emphasizing the interdependent nature of the human species in a global village with shrinking resources and an instantaneous planetary communications system. There are many clever ways that teachers can teach peace concepts in contemporary high schools, e.g., what does the situation in Somalia portend for urban residents in the United States? Many high schools in Milwaukee have adopted peer mediation programs that help students deal

with problems they have both at school and in their homes and communities. These high schools have by now received peer mediators trained in middle schools, whose skills at negotiating school hostilities are helping with the increasingly stratified nature of urban high schools whose students are dividing into hostile, warring camps that are often armed.

Teachers at the high school level say that it is important to start at a young age teaching children how to be nurturing, how to negotiate conflicts, and how to communicate in ways that don't spark angry reactions. By the time a student has reached high school in an urban area, where he or she is confronted with gang violence in street cultures, peer pressure for violent behavior makes it hard for students to listen to pleas for nonviolence. Many adolescents have well set angry, aggressive communications patterns, defensive behaviors, and deep seated fears. Fifty minutes a day, which most high school teachers spend with their students, doesn't allow enough time for students to open up and share fears about violence. The cognitive nature of most high school classes does not provide room for deeply affective concerns.

Junior High School Efforts in Peace Education

Many junior high school teachers in Milwaukee have been striving to help young people think about peace. In the 1991-92 academic year students at Fritsche middle school provided peer mediation services with 273 mediations. A physical education teacher at Fritsche helps run support groups after school for children who have experienced a death of a family member, who have witnessed violent acts, or who

have a relative in prison. The slogan of this school is "Where Knowledge Builds Peace." Grand avenue school has a focus on global education with a principal dedicated to enhancing peace activities in all parts of the curriculum. One teacher at this school has been assigned to spend her full day in a "Working Out Room," where teachers send referrals, students who have participated in or seen some horrible acts of violence and are too traumatized to participate effectively in normal classrooms. Other junior high schools use the occasion of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday to start a peace month, where they conduct activities like having each homeroom present an assembly to the whole school on peace themes. Junior high schools in Milwaukee have also been promoting mentoring programs with local businesses so that young men can learn positive, nonviolent notions of masculinity to offset some of violent images they see in the media.

The early teen period of development is conceivably one of the most stressful times in life. Attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts seem to change momentarily. Junior high school students who are reaching adulthood look to adults to construct their own ideologies. Thought patterns and behaviors adopted by children in this age range, 10 to 13, will last a lifetime. Young people approaching adolescence will model themselves after behaviors they see in their environments. For those children who come from violent homes and/or crime ridden neighborhoods, the presence or caring adults who teach alternatives to violence, can make a huge difference in how they respond to conflict. Peace educators teach young people ways to recognize and

express feelings of anger, jealousy, frustration, stress, and other feelings of discomfort in nonviolent ways that do not hurt themselves, others, and the community.

Elementary Schools with Peace Themes

Many elementary schools in Milwaukee have adopted peace themes and activities. Staff at Thirty-eighth Street School emphasize the concept "peace works" and recognize on a daily basis student peacemakers. At this inner city school students write about peace, discuss what attributes a peacemaker holds, and create art activities on peace themes. Escuela Fratney, a bilingual school, has developed a thematic curriculum based on the four themes of 1) we respect ourselves and others; 2) communication; 3) we make a difference on Planet Earth, and 4) we tell our stories to the world. A new urban Waldorf school has a philosophy based upon peace, as do two elementary Montessori schools.

Several schools have adopted a special assembly which on a yearly basis gives awards to those students in each homeroom who have made distinguished contributions to keeping the peace at that school. Other schools award the "good citizen for the semester," a student who has taken leadership in promoting and encouraging peaceful behavior. These public recognitions of peaceful behavior underscores to students how their actions can contribute to developing peace both in their own lives but also in the world. Such acknowledgement of peacemaking helps make students feel that these are significant activities and counterbalances public perceptions of peacemaking as being cowardly or weak.

Many elementary schools are seeking ways to help children deal with the strong emotions associated with violence. At some of the Montessori classes teachers start the day with a circle where students can say anything they like about their own lives. Often in these sessions pupils will mention violent episodes and receive support for their feelings both from their teacher and their peers. A similar tactic is a family meeting in class, or even a "me" box, where students can write down personal issues, place them in the box, and then pull them out to discuss them. Such activities allow children to express their concerns about violence, in nonthreatening ways. Some teachers post charts on their bulletin boards that demonstrate positive and constructive ways to deal with anger. Other teachers are working on self esteem exercises and positive pledges that help counteract some of the negative messages some young people receive at home, in the media, or in the neighborhood where they live. Peace educators try to create a safe space where children who come from violent homes and communities can express their anger, instead of it coming out at teachers and other students. Peace educators understand how hard it is for young children to hold in this anger and when it comes out it is often violent and uncontrolled. They appreciate the legitimacy of this anger and teach their students appropriate ways to express it.

Many teachers who are initiating these activities in response to violence in their students' lives may not realize they are participating in a world-wide educational reform effort to make the world more peaceful by teaching peace education in schools. These teachers in Milwaukee are reaching into their hearts, responding with love to

concerns expressed by their students, using their professional skills to help heal the wounds their students face in a violent world, and presenting to students images of nonviolence to help counteract some of the violent images they receive from their culture.

Peer Mediation

By far the fastest growing and most widely accepted aspect of peace education reforms is peer mediation which has "improved quality of life on the playground, in the lunchroom and halls, and in the classroom" (Gentry & Benenson, 1992, p. 101) by training students to be mediators, so that when students are facing conflicts at school, they don't need to go to adults to solve their conflicts. Rather, they can solve them nonviolently by themselves using the skills they have learned as peer mediators. School mediation programs were initiated in 1982 by the Community Boards program in San Francisco. Research studies about peer mediation have indicated results similar to those stated below:

> The teachers reported that after the training conflicts among students became less severe and destructive. Conflicts referred to the teacher were reduced by 80 percent and the number of conflicts referred to he principal was reduced to zero. (Johnson, Johnson, & Dudley, 1992, p. 93)

Teachers in all schools, whether they be in rural, urban, or suburban settings face daily conflicts which include put downs, teasing, playground conflicts, physical aggression and fights, academic work conflicts, and turn taking. Most youth in the

United States are not taught how to manage these conflicts constructively in the home or in the community at large. Research shows that young people taught these skills in schools often take them back into their communities helping parents, friends and relatives resolve conflicts nonviolently (Stichter, 1986).

Over half the schools in Milwaukee now have peer mediation programs. Research conducted by the Human Relations Office at Milwaukee Public Schools indicates that mediation most frequently occurs in problems where students are hassling each other, fighting, having disagreements, or spreading rumors. In a typical school, one staff member will be given release time to train and supervise the peer mediators who are chosen sometimes by teachers but often by peers. After these students are trained, they negotiate conflicts in the school. Often when students have conflicts they will write a note about the conflict and place it in a box in a classroom. At a regular time each day the teacher will collect these notes and assign the students who have the conflict to go to the area of the school set aside for school based conflict management and let the students work out a solution.

School mediation programs have been especially successful in school yards and in dealing with bullies who lack empathy and want authority over others. Peer mediators assigned to playgrounds are given T-shirts so that they are easily identified. When the mediators spot a non-physical conflict they approach the pupils involved. If there is a physical conflict, the mediators don't get involved. When they approach a non-physical conflict, they must first introduce themselves and then ask those involved if they would like some help solving their problem. If one or more of the parties do not

want help, the mediators walk away. If parties have to agree to accept help, the mediators take the disputants through a structured process to get them to resolve their conflict. These programs change school yard bullies to constructive leaders who listen to how others feel.

The mediation process requires students to use active listening skills to mirror back to disputants their disagreement. Mediators help disputants listen to each other and keep a conversation going. They encourage disputants to find a solution and serve as witnesses to any agreement reached (Johnson & Johnson, 1991). This process teaches positive communication and problem solving skills that help improve a school's environment. One principal involved in this program at a Milwaukee elementary schools saw a 50% drop in the number of problems referred to his office. He also suggested that all students should go through the peer mediation program because it teaches leadership, communication skills, conflict resolution, along with many other necessary skills student's need to live and work with others. A Milwaukee teacher who is the peer mediator trainer at her elementary school made the following comment:

> There was a fight in the hall today between two eighth graders. I was just trying to conduct traffic when I overheard some other students saying that those fighting should try to work something out and that it is stupid to fight. I also saw an improvement in attitudes of those students who are peer mediators. It was not only the "best" students (the quiet ones who turn in their homework and never cause trouble) that become

peer mediators. Some were students who seem to be involved in so many of the conflicts at school. Now they see themselves as having an important role in the school.

Peer mediation and school based conflict management programs help put out fires in schools. They are seen as being effective in helping create a more positive school climate; they provide students with skills to manage conflicts constructively in their lives; and they provide school staff a helpful tool to address conflict and violence in students' lives. They teach practical skills, but do not necessarily address the larger question of why do these fires get started in the first place. Mediation is a tool that empowers young people to solve their conflicts. Instead of using violence, they use their brains.

System Wide Training in Nonviolence

Staff at the central office at MPS has been busy addressing problems of violence in the schools. Many of them are deeply committed to the principles of peace education reform. The guidance staff has developed a change curriculum that teaches positive communication skills, self esteem, decision making, problem solving skills, and anger management. The human relations staff has been providing peer mediation training, offering curricula dealing with conflict prevention, and giving workshops for students in communications and cultural awareness.

The central staff at MPS promotes a violence prevention program that targets elementary schools in an effort to decrease the underlying propensity toward violence and the use of violence as a coping strategy for youth. Violence prevention programs

began in the early 1970s in the Boston area under the leadership of Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith. Because of high levels of homicide and juvenile violence, they have recently been endorsed and supported by the Epidemiology Branch at the Federal Centers for Disease control in Atlanta. A national curriculum developed by Dr. Prothrow-Stith published in 1987 has stimulated interest in using educational means to help young people deal with anger in productive, nonviolent ways (1987).

As part of an ongoing commitment to peace education, MPS has an active violence prevention program, now in its fifth year of existence, run by the office of School Psychological Services. Because of increased levels of violence in Milwaukee, MPS has made this program a priority and released five professional staff to deliver inservices over a two year period to every elementary school in the system. These staff hope to end patterns of violence by training teachers to help their students deal constructively with conflict by teaching that violent behavior is a choice with negative short and long term consequences, and by illustrating that violence is preventable. Violence prevention programs have the goal of helping students recognize the extent of violence in society, accept anger as a part of life, and generate healthy methods for dealing with anger.

For the past 3 years the staff development academy at MPS has sponsored inservice workshops for teachers on peace education. These workshops acquaint teachers with peace education curricula and challenge them to consider how they can take the insights of nonviolence and apply them to their classrooms. They also require teachers to develop peace education lesson plans for their classes.

PRINCIPLES OF MODERN PEACE EDUCATION

Many problems in today's schools are related to violence. Teachers who are adopting peace education reforms are using the insights of a nonviolent approach to life that reflects the teachings of Jesus Christ, Buddhists, Martin Luther King Jr., Tolstoy, Thoreau, Mother Theresa, Cesar Chavez, and feminist educators like Carol Gilligan, Jane Martin, and Nel Noddings. These efforts at educating youth about peace have the potential to reduce some of the violence in the modern world and to make schools more conducive to learning. Students distraught by violence--whether it be homelessness, random killings, gang activities, or domestic abuse, have a hard time focusing on school lessons. Educational reforms that ignore these problems of violence are like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. The best intentions of adult educators will be undermined by icebergs of violence lurking directly under the surface of children's lives.

Seven years of peace educational practice in the Milwaukee Public School system provides some principles for peace education--all children can benefit from peace education; young people need to learn about alternatives to violence; violence has a profound emotional impact upon young people; peace education has a broader realm than conflict resolution; all subjects can incorporate peace concepts; and all teachers can use a peaceful pedagogy.

All children can benefit from peace education. Although this paper has highlighted the problems of violence in an urban school district, violence presents problems in schools in many different communities. Many homes are either violent or

dysfunctional. Children raised in these homes need adult care and compassion to help them develop a sense of security. By teaching about the problems of violence, peace educators provide young people with an understanding of some of the most troubling features of modern life. Ignoring these problems in schools can contribute to despair on the part of youth preoccupied with problems of violence in their lives.

Young people need to learn about alternatives to violence. At the same time that teachers in many Milwaukee schools have been addressing violence in their classes, they have also been teaching about nonviolent alternatives. Talking about violence can be depressing. Young people need to be told the stories of peacemakers, heroes who have used nonviolence to create a better world. Learning about how adults are organizing block clubs to combat neighborhood crime, struggling to provide shelter for the homeless, and campaigning to protect the environment can give youth a sense of optimism about their capacities for addressing contemporary problems of violence. Peace educators teach about both the worst and the best of human potential. Peace education does more than teach people how to stop violence. It spells out conditions for positive peace.

Violence has a profound emotional impact upon young people. Peace educators can play an extremely important role in the lives of their students who are troubled by violence. Children who have directly experienced violence have been wounded either physically or psychologically. Teachers can encourage their students to talk about these wounds and through a process of active listening can help heal some of the hurt of these wounds. In order to appropriately help their students

manage their anger, teachers have to be skilled in affective educational techniques to help their students learn how to express their feelings constructively. Peace educators have an important task--to nurture the wounds of children in this violent world. Peace education goes right to the core of a person's being--addressing both fears and also the tremendous capacity for love that exists within each human being. Teachers can also work on their own violent feelings in order to help create a positive climate in their schools. Compassion, caring, nurturing, and friendship are some of the many tools of peacemaking that need be taught in schools if we are to be successful in overcoming the academic failings of postmodern education.

Peace education has a broader realm than conflict resolution. School based conflict management techniques provide skills to help students deal with anger in productive ways, but peace education explores the roots of violence. Peace educators teach about how national and international commitments to violence support violence locally and instruct students about environmental problems. Research has shown that peer mediation and other techniques can make schools a safer place (Burrell & Vogl, 1990), but peace education implies much more than learning how to solve conflicts. Peace educators seek to replace war and violence with nonviolent forms of conflict resolution and to teach about ways to create just social and personal relations that preclude violence. They enlighten their students about the skills of peacemaking, but not in the spirit of trying to promote better behavior in schools. Peace education has as a goal solving the problems of violence

(Harris, 1990b), not just making schools safer. In order to overcome violence, students and adults will have to take risks to challenge the violence of the status quo.

All subjects can incorporate peace concepts. Peace education should be infused throughout the curriculum. All teachers can help model the role of caretaking adult by addressing issues that the conscious minds of so many young people are forcing to contain. They can also teach peace concepts. Teachers do not have to invent the wheel in order to infuse peace education curricula into their classes. After 20 years of practice, there exist many fine curricula that demonstrate how to teach peace in age appropriate ways.[2] With young children classroom teachers can use the insights of peace education to help pupils deal with conflicts in their classrooms. Up to the age 10 young people tend to personalize enemies, but after age ten young people are more interested about conflicts between groups. After age 13 young people start to ask questions about why there are so many conflicts. Teachers in all classes can figure out how to get students to articulate their concerns about violence and use the insights of peace education to address these concerns.

All teachers can use a peaceful pedagogy. Peace educators do not rely on domination but rather try to establish democratic classrooms where teachers and students together explore the impact of violence upon their lives. These teaching methodologies, by using the principles of cooperative learning, motivate students and result in better student retention. Being in a secure environment will increase the ability of students in today's schools to learn cognitive material. The emphasis upon competition in the curricular proposals advanced during the 1980s has increased

student insecurity about the future. Because there aren't enough good paying jobs, schools have become a vicious track meet with the losers being placed on the slag heaps of humanity. Peace pedagogy encourages students to share concerns and pool resources to seek solutions to the terrible problems of violence they see all around them.

Promoters of peace education reform efforts insist that adults must help young people deal with the problems of violence that are so overwhelming to young people in today's schools. At the school wide level administrators can use these reforms to turn their schools into safe sanctuaries for students distressed by violence. At the classroom level peace educators use cooperative teaching methodologies to encourage students to seek solutions to the problems of violence in their lives. They teach students to revere life. Teachers who have used these strategies have discovered that peace education also has a strong emotive aspect that requires from adults nurturing skills to help heal some of the wounds brought by young people into the classroom.

Adults have a responsibility to provide a secure environment for young people. Teachers adopting this reform are attempting to live up to that responsibility, although their efforts are often overwhelmed in a culture where 70% of the parents believe it is appropriate to use physical punishment (spanking) and the media are replete with violent images. Peace education, which helps students deal with the problems of violence, can contribute a small part to the solution to the problems caused by school

failure in a postmodern world. Children who do not learn about peace and nonviolence will not know how to create a peaceful world when they are adults.

Notes

1. Exceptions to this are the August 1989 special edition of the *Harvard Educational Review*, "Education and the Threat of Nuclear War," and the Fall 1982 special edition of *Teachers College Record*, "Education for Peace and Disarmament: Toward a Living World." Colman McCarthy, a columnist for *The Washington Post*, has repeatedly called for peace education in modern schools. (See the December 29, 1992 edition of *The Washington Post,* C5.)

2. These are some of the many fine curricula that will provide teachers with ample resources to begin peace education concepts.

Alternatives to Violence (Cleveland; Ohio; Friends Meeting, 1984)

Conflict Management: A Curriculum for Peacemaking (Denver, CO: Cornerstone, 1983)

Creative Conflict Solving for Kids (Miami, FL: Grace Contrino Abrams Peace Education Foundation, 1985)

Choices: A Unit on Conflict and Nuclear War (Washington: Union of Concerned Scientists, 1983)

Decision Making in a Nuclear Age (Weston, MA: Haycon House, 1983)

Dialogue: A Teaching Guide to Nuclear Issues (Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility, 1983)

Education for Peace and Justice (St. Louis, MO: Institute for Peace & Justice, 1981)

Elementary Perspectives 1: Teaching Concepts of Peace and Conflict (Boston, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility, 1990)

Keeping the Peace: Practicing Cooperation and Conflict. Resolution with Preschoolers (Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1989)

The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet (Wayne, NJ: Avery Publishing, 1978)

Learning Peace, Teaching Peace (Philadelphia, PA: Jane Addams Peace Association, 1974)

Learning the Skills of Peacemaking (Rolling Hills Estates, CA: Jalmar Press, 1987)

Let's Talk About Peace: Let's Talk About Nuclear War (Oakland, CA: Parenting in Nuclear Age, 1983)

A Manual on Nonviolence and Children (Philadelphia: New Society Press, 1984)

Milwaukee Public Schools Curriculum, 1985.

One World, One Earth: Educating Children for Social Responsibility (Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1993)

Our Future at Stake (Oakland, CA: Citizens Policy Center, 1984)

Peace Works: Young Peacemakers Project Book II (Elsin, IL: Brethren Press, 1989)

Watermelons Not War ! (Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1984)

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